

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee on the  
Department of Social Services Budget**

by Evelyn Richardson  
February 11, 2010

Good evening. My name is Evelyn Richardson. I live in Hartford and I am here tonight to express my concern about the proposed co-pays in the Medicaid program.

I am a mother with three children at home. My children and I get our health care through Medicaid. I was finally able to breath easier when I saw that my children's health coverage isn't on the chopping block any longer – but then I found out that my health coverage is still on it.

Up until last month I was working three jobs - two full-time and one part-time - just to be able to earn one decent salary. This salary still kept me in the lowest economic bracket. I still earned enough to keep me needing the assistance of the Medicaid coverage that I receive.

Every increase or decrease in my earnings is gone over with a fine tooth comb by the Department of Social Services. If I earn more money I get less food stamp assistance. I never am allowed the luxury of not needing food assistance at this time.

The only way I could pay 5% of my income on health care costs would be to NOT pay the rent, purchase school uniforms, keep my lights on or one or more of any of those or other combinations. Because quite frankly right now I have no money left after addressing these areas.

I don't want to be on Medicaid. I want a good, decent-paying job that has decent health coverage attached to it and that I don't have to risk my longevity and health to maintain. I am presently working on my education to do just that.

I wish that I never had to visit a doctor. I wish that I had perfect health and didn't need to take medications ever in life. I wish that I didn't have to work for places that pay an adult woman of 44 years of age minimum wage and still not make enough money to provide for my children. I wish that I didn't need the DSS for any help. But I do! And I need to be in a position through my sustained health to work my way out of the system now that I have grown to be aware of a better way.

5% of my income at this time is equivalent to a million dollars since I simply can't afford it. Please consider that as a result of me working extra jobs to make ends meet I have used my health coverage more frequently than ever before in my life. The money has not grown but the need to maintain my health to be able to meet the demands of my jobs has.

If I had to pay anything towards doctor visits and my prescriptions, I would be in danger of not being able to pay my bills that are need based. I do not fear loosing out on wants. But I put my family in harm's way when I am not in a position to provide the basic needs of life for them.

Thank you.